

ALASKA DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND GAME

DIVISION OF COMMERCIAL FISHERIES

NEWS RELEASE



Cora Campbell, Commissioner
Jeff Regnart, Director



Contact:
Jeff Estensen, Area Management Biologist
Dayna Green, Asst. Area Management Biologist
Phone: (907) 949-1320
Fax: (907) 949-1830

Lower Yukon Area Office
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Emmonak, Alaska 99581
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2012 Yukon River Fall Salmon Fishery News Release # 17

Fall Update # 3, Yukon Area Salmon Fishery

Districts Affected: Yukon Area

Fall Season Assessment

The estimated cumulative fall chum salmon total run size through August 5, based on run reconstruction, is 470,000 fish. This is above the historical median of 226,000 fish for that date. The drift test fishery projects at Emmonak and Mountain Village corroborate the timing and relative passage strength estimated by the Pilot Station sonar project. The first pulse of fall chum salmon entered the lower Yukon River on July 17 and was estimated to be 126,000 fish in size. Two additional pulses entered the lower Yukon River on July 25 and July 31 and were estimated to 142,500 and 56,000 fish in size. A fourth pulse has just entered the mouth on August 4 and will be assessed as it passes the Pilot Station sonar project.

The 2012 fall chum salmon run passed the historical first quarter point on July 31 and will reach the historical mid-point on August 8. The fall chum salmon run projection is now derived from the cumulative fall chum salmon passage past Pilot Station sonar, based on run reconstruction. The projected 2012 fall chum salmon run size, through August 5, is approximately 1.3 million fish.

Coho salmon have begun entering the Yukon River and it is early in their run. The cumulative passage by the Pilot Station sonar project through August 5, based on run reconstruction, is 8,822 fish, which is above the historical median of 2,772 fish for that date.

Lower Yukon River Cooperative Drift Test Fishing – YDFDA, ADF&G

The cumulative CPUE for fall chum salmon through August 5 was 1,134.5, which is above the historical median of 360.9 for that date. The cumulative CPUE through August 5 for coho salmon was 18.7, which is below the historical median of 21.4 for that date.

Mountain Village Drift Test Fishing - Asacarsarmiut Traditional Council and BSFA

The cumulative CPUE for fall chum salmon through August 5 was 597.2, which is below the historical median of 843.8 for that date. The cumulative CPUE for coho salmon through August 5 was 23.0, which is below the historical median of 35.1 for that date.

Pilot Station Sonar Project - ADF&G

The cumulative fall chum salmon passage through August 5 is 313,029 fish, which is above the median passage of 231,061 fish for that date. The cumulative coho salmon passage through August 5 is 5,002 fish, which is above the median passage of 2,637 fish for that date.

Age Composition

The fall chum salmon age composition from the 6" LYTF drift nets through August 2 was 0.4% age-3, 67.9% age-4, 27.5% age-5, and 4.3% age-6 fish. The average age-4 fish is 60% for this date and average age-5 fish 39.1%. The sample size was 530 fish for ages and 578 for gender. Males contributed 51.6% to the samples, which is above the average of 43.8%.

The combined fall chum salmon age composition from commercial harvest periods in District 1 (through July 30) was 0.3% age-3, 74.7% age-4, 22.0% age-5, and 3.0% age-6 fish. The sample size was 400 fish for ages and 1,302 for gender. The proportion of females in the commercial catch samples was 60.5%.

Fall Season Management

In accordance with the Yukon River Drainage Fall Chum Salmon Management Plan, a total run size near 1.3 million is adequate for escapement needs, full subsistence opportunity, and has a surplus available for other uses. Subsistence fishing at this time is now on the full regulatory schedules in the lower and middle river sections, yet remains restrictive in the middle and upper portions of Subdistrict 5-D due to the conservation of Chinook salmon. As fall chum salmon approach their average midpoint in run timing through the lower river, the basis for management is shifting from preseason expectations to actual current inseason run assessment. At this time there is confidence an above average surplus is available for harvest. Therefore, while commercial fishing is likely to follow on a normal schedule, managers will consider additional opportunities dependent upon the current assessment. Fishermen should be aware that commercial periods may be announced with short notice.

Fall Commercial Salmon Fishing

Through August 5, seven fall commercial fishing periods have been announced in District Y-1 and five periods in District Y-2. Additional commercial fishing periods will be dependent upon inseason run strength assessment and market interest.

Preliminary harvest information for District Y-1:

Period #5: District Y-1 Set Net Only Area, 9 hours (1:00 p.m. until 10:00 p.m. July 30), remainder of District Y-1, 6 hours (4:00 p.m. until 10:00 p.m. July 30).

20,156 fall chum/137,369 lbs. (\$0.75/lb.), 1,100 coho/6,698 lbs. (\$1.00/lb.), Incidental harvest (not sold): 3 Chinook salmon.

Period #6: District Y-1 Set Net Only Area, 9 hours (1:00 p.m. until 10:00 p.m. August 2), remainder of District Y-1, 9 hours (1:00 p.m. until 10:00 p.m. August 2).
5,284 fall chum/35,310 lbs. (\$0.75/lb.), 822 coho/4,983 lbs. (\$1.00/lb.), Incidental harvest (not sold): 0 Chinook salmon.

Period #7: District Y-1 Set Net Only Area, 5 hours (5:00 p.m. until 10:00 p.m. August 5), remainder of District Y-1, 5 hours (5:00 p.m. until 10:00 p.m. August 5).
11,461 fall chum/78,522 lbs. (\$0.75/lb.), 1,048 coho/6,230 lbs. (\$1.00/lb.), Incidental harvest (not sold): 0 Chinook salmon

The cumulative harvest for Y-1 through August 5 is 95,939 fall chum salmon and 3,145 coho salmon. The incidental harvest of Chinook salmon is 59 fish.

Preliminary harvest information for District Y-2:

Period #3: District Y-2, 6 hours (3:00 p.m. until 9:00 p.m. July 30).
17,341 fall chum/119,811 lbs. (\$0.75/lb.), 277 coho/1,575 lbs. (\$1.00/lb.), Incidental harvest (not sold): 1 Chinook salmon.

Period #4: District Y-2, 6 hours (3:00 p.m. until 9:00 p.m. August 1).
14,003 fall chum/90,502 lbs. (\$0.75/lb.), 436 coho/2,513 lbs. (\$1.00/lb.), Incidental harvest (not sold): 0 Chinook salmon.

Period #5: District Y-2, 6 hours (3:00 p.m. until 9:00 p.m. August 4).
11,017 fall chum/74,205 lbs. (\$0.75/lb.), 757 coho/4,535 lbs. (\$1.00/lb.), Incidental harvest (not sold): 4 Chinook salmon.

The cumulative harvest for Y-2 through August 5 is 57,884 fall chum salmon and 1,482 coho salmon, and the incidental harvest of Chinook salmon is 31 fish.

Subsistence Salmon Fishing

Coastal District: The Coastal District is open 7 days per week, 24 hours a day and fishermen may use gillnets with a mesh size of 7.5 inches or smaller

Districts 1, 2, 3: Subsistence salmon fishing is open 7 days per week, 24 hours a day except for 12 hours before, during, and 12 hours after each commercial fishing period. Fishermen may use gillnets with a mesh size of 7.5 inches or smaller during open subsistence salmon fishing periods.

The Innoko River: Subsistence salmon fishing is open 7 days per week, 24 hours a day and fishermen may use gillnets with a mesh size of 7.5 inches or smaller.

Subdistrict 4-A (from $\frac{3}{4}$ miles downstream of Old Paradise Village upstream to Cone Point):

This area includes the mainstem Yukon River communities of Anvik, Grayling, Kaltag, Nulato, and Koyukuk. Subsistence salmon fishing in Subdistrict 4-A is currently open 5 days per week from 6:00 p.m. Tuesdays to 6:00 p.m. Sundays. Use of drift gillnets to harvest fall chum salmon is allowed in that portion of Subdistrict 4-A from Stink Creek upstream to Cone Point during open subsistence fishing periods.

Subdistricts 4-B and 4-C (from Cone Point to Illinois Creek): This area includes the mainstem Yukon River communities of Galena and Ruby. Subsistence salmon fishing is open 5 days per week from 6:00 p.m. Sundays to 6:00 p.m. Fridays.

In District 4, fishermen may use gillnets with a mesh size of 7.5 inches or smaller during open subsistence salmon fishing periods.

Koyukuk River: Subsistence salmon fishing in the Koyukuk River is open 7 days per week, 24 hours a day and fishermen may use gillnets with a mesh size of 7.5 inches or smaller.

Subdistricts 5-A, 5-B and 5-C: Subsistence salmon fishing is open 5 days per week from 6:00 p.m. Tuesdays until 6:00 p.m. Sundays.

In an effort to protect Chinook salmon as they pass through this long section of river, Subdistrict 5-D has been divided into three separate areas.

Subdistricts 5-D-Lower (from an ADF&G regulatory marker 2 miles downstream of Waldron Creek upstream to the Hadweenzic River and including all adjacent tributaries): This area includes the communities of Stevens Village and Beaver. Subsistence salmon fishing is open 7 days a week, 24 hours per day.

Subdistricts 5-D-Middle (from the Hadweenzic River to the upstream mouth of 22 Mile Slough and including all adjacent tributaries): This area includes the community of Fort Yukon. Subsistence salmon fishing is currently closed and will remain closed until further notice.

Subdistrict 5-D-Upper (from the upstream mouth 22 Mile Slough to the U.S./Canada border and including all adjacent tributaries): This area includes the communities of Circle, and Eagle. Subsistence salmon fishing is currently closed and will remain closed until further notice.

The department will notify fishermen by August 9 concerning the subsistence salmon fishing schedule for each portion of Subdistrict 5-D.

Subdistricts 6-A and 6-B (from the mouth of the Tanana River upstream to the downstream mouth of Wood River): This area includes the communities of Manley, Minto, and Nenana. Subsistence salmon fishing is open for two 42-hour periods per week from 6:00 pm Fridays until 12:00 noon Sundays and from 6:00 pm Mondays until 12:00 noon Wednesdays. In the Old Minto Area, subsistence fishing for salmon is open for one five day fishing period per week from 6:00pm Fridays until 6:00pm Wednesdays.

Subdistricts 6-C (from the mouth of the Wood River upstream to the downstream mouth of the Salcha River): This area includes the communities of Fairbanks, North Pole, and Salcha. Personal use salmon fishing is open for two 42-hour periods per week from 6:00 pm Fridays until 12:00 noon Sundays and from 6:00 pm Mondays until 12:00 noon Wednesdays.

During subsistence salmon fishing closures, fish wheels may not be operated and gillnets with a mesh size greater than four inches and a length greater than 60 feet must be removed from the water.

Recorded fishery announcements and updates are available 24 hours a day at (907) 949-1731 or 1-866-479-7387. If you have any questions regarding this report, please call the Emmonak ADF&G office at (907) 949-1320 or the Fairbanks ADF&G office at (907) 459-7274. The Emmonak ADF&G office will stand by on VHF channel 7A.

This has been an announcement by the Alaska Department of Fish and Game in cooperation with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

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